

THE BOURBON NEWS.

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IN HIS OWN TRAP. BY PHILIP BEAUFOY.

THE smoking concert of the staff of Messrs. Cardew & Co., the great engineering firm in Westminister, was in full swing at the Broad Street hotel, and everything was going as smoothly as the organizers could have wished.

Two of the non-professional performers who assisted at that entertainment were Jack Langley and Arthur Mayhew. Langley was one of the most popular men in the office. He had a kind, unselfish nature, which made him liked on all sides; whilst, whenever the firm had any festivity in progress, he charmed everyone with his beautiful baritone voice.

The two young men occupied rather subordinate positions in the office. Langley was one of the assistant bookkeepers, whilst Mayhew, who was two years his junior, was in the correspondence department. Mayhew had always been the acknowledged singer of the office until Langley came, and then he had to take a back seat, for he knew that the newcomer could give him any amount of points at the singing business and beat him every time.

Langley was in fine form to-night. He sang the song noted on the programme, and at the end of it received an enthusiastic encore. He sang again, receiving even a greater reception than before, and at the close, the excited audience, greedy for more, called for him afresh.

The chairman, Mr. George Cardew, then arose to his feet and announced that Mr. Langley "would oblige again later on." Then the noisy young men settled down and waited calmly the next turn.

A little later in the evening Mayhew came on. He sang his best, but his best was not to be compared with Langley's worst, and though the indulgent audience applauded him moderately, he knew in his heart of hearts that he did not deserve one round of applause. And yet, knowing this, he hated the man who was winning praise which was thoroughly deserved.

At length the end came, as it comes to everything. In the cloak-room a noisy band of riotous smokers demanded their hats and coats, and Langley found himself beside Mayhew.

"Halloo, Mayhew," he said cheerily. "Congratulations you, my boy. Your song went all right, I'm sure."

He said this in all good nature, for he felt sorry for the other man, and wished to comfort him as far as possible. But Mayhew, sick with jealousy, and excited with the alcohol he had been drinking, turned on him savagely. "Confound you and your congratulations," he said; "keep them to yourself. Good-night."

Turning abruptly on his heel, he made his way out of the cloak-room, leaving Langley aghast at his behavior. "Old Mayhew must be a bit hurt, and no mistake," remarked a young fellow who stood close by; "fancy his going on like that."

"Poor chap," said Langley; "after all, I don't wonder at his being upset. It's awfully discouraging when you feel that you haven't made a real success." And all the way home he was thinking of Mayhew, and saying to himself: "Poor Mayhew—poor old chap."

Whilst Mayhew, as he walked homeward, was saying: "I hate him—I hate him—I hate him!"

When two men are brought constantly together, one of them desiring to injure the other, an opportunity for doing so invariably presents itself sooner or later. In the case of Arthur Mayhew, it arrived sooner than he expected, and it fell out in this wise.

About two months after the concert recorded at the beginning of this history, the firm were much distressed to find that some one in their employ was robbing them week after week. One day postal orders would vanish, then their valuables, and so on. Even personal property was appropriated, and at length there came the day when Mr. Cardew said that the scandal must go on no longer. He accordingly communicated with the police, and a detective of great experience was sent down to interview him.

Now, so that the news of the detective's advent should not become public in the office, Mr. Cardew arranged for his visit to take place at seven o'clock, when everybody was supposed to have gone home. And this indeed was the case, all the staff having departed with the exception of Mayhew.

He therefore listened now with all his ears. "First of all," said the detective, "I must ask you if everyone has left the office, for the plan I am about to propose to you, Mr. Cardew, is one which must never go beyond ourselves if it is to have any possible chance of success."

"I believe everyone has gone home," returned the other; "but let us come and make certain."

Hearing these words, the ingenious Mayhew slipped behind the huge safe in the corner of the room, so that when the two men looked in, they saw no one there.

"We're safe enough," said the detective, gruffly. "And now, sir, I'll detail to you what I propose."

"Go on," said Mr. Cardew, quietly. "I am listening. Whatever you propose in reason shall be carried out, and I am resolved to discover the culprit concerned in all these disgraceful thefts, even if it costs me £1,000 to do it."

The detective gave the partner a somewhat contemptuous look, as though he despised him for his display of excitement. Then he said, very slowly and deliberately: "What I propose is this, sir. Next Saturday morning, at 11 o'clock, leave on a conspicuous part of your desk in this room your purse. Let it be well filled with gold—not with notes—for thieves often fight shy of notes for obvious reasons. Notes have numbers, and numbers are awkward things sometimes. Let the gold, therefore, be the only thing in the purse, and leave it as I have said where everyone can see it. You might scatter one or two other articles of personal property, such as a handkerchief, a cigar-case, etc., on the desk, so as to give the business an unprejudiced appearance. Having done all this, let it be known that you are going out and will not be back for a few hours. Come back at one, and see if the purse is still on the desk. If it is not, send downstairs for me, and I shall be in waiting at the door with a couple of plain-clothes men. Your next action will be to have every door in the place locked, and allow nobody to leave until he has been thoroughly searched. If you have a cloak-room or hat-room, that must be searched also, as it is quite as likely the thief would deposit the stolen property in his overcoat as anywhere else."

Mr. Cardew rose and paced the room excitedly. "My dear sir," he said, speaking in a quick, nervous tone, "I really don't think I could possibly sanction such a course as that. It is most un-English—most arbitrary—most humiliating."

"Doubtless it is," returned the other, coolly; "but it's about the only way I can see of clearing up this business. If you'll allow me to make the remark, sir, I would remind you that just now you said you would give a thousand pounds to do so."

"So I would, so I would, but I cannot humiliate my assistants, some of whom are old and trusted servants."

"There will be no humiliation. You can explain the circumstances, and I am sure every sensible man-jack of them will see that the course taken is the only one under the circumstances. Besides, you can tone it down by announcing a holiday, or something of that sort, to make up for their temporary inconvenience."

"Yes, I might do that," replied Mr. Cardew, musingly; "and after all, as you say, when they realize the circumstances, they cannot possibly take offense. Well, well," and here he sighed slightly, "if you are convinced that this course is for the best, take it, by all means."

"Very good, sir," said the detective, as he rose to take his leave. "On Saturday next, then, at one p. m. I shall be at the door. If you want me you had better let me know yourself, as in cases of this kind third persons are always dangerous. Good-night, sir."

He left the room quickly, Mr. Cardew accompanying him to the door, and letting himself out at the same time. Then Mayhew slowly took his way home, thinking deeply all the time. Here was a chance at last, a glorious, wonderful chance of getting his rival Jack Langley into disgrace. It would be as easy as smoking a cigarette. On Saturday he would find an excuse for entering the partners' room and he would then take the purse, secreting it in Langley's overcoat pocket downstairs in the cloakroom. He would have no difficulty in finding the coat among the large number there, for Langley's peg was No. 66, just above his own, which was 35.

Then there would follow the finding of the purse in his hated rival's pocket, and then, perhaps, the police station, and the subsequent disgrace of a criminal trial. Perhaps the firm would let him off, but at any rate he would be dismissed, and his talents and popularity would rankle no more in the plotter's heart. Yes, it could be done, and, by Jove, it would be done.

He knew that young Langley had lately been a little pressed for money, and had obtained advances from the cashier. This would make his guilt all the more palpable, and it seemed to him as he thought over the plot that fate itself was on his side, aiding him and abetting him in the vile scheme that now was alive in his subtle brain.

Saturday morning came in due course. At 11 o'clock Mr. Cardew entered the large office, where all the workers were engaged, and said to the cashier in a voice that all could hear: "I'm going down to the works. I shall be back in an hour or so."

Within 20 minutes of his departure, Mayhew cautiously approached his room, and there, sure enough, on the partner's desk lay a small purse. He did not stop to examine the contents, but, hastily putting it in his pocket, he rushed downstairs into the cloakroom, which, fortunately for him, was deserted.

Yes, that was Langley's coat, but he must make sure by looking in the pocket and seeing some documentary evidence, to make certain more certain. He accordingly pulled out the first pa-

per that came to hand, an envelope addressed "J. Langley, Esq." The right coat, of course. With a quick movement he placed the well-filled purse in the right-hand pocket of the overcoat, and then carelessly sauntered back to the office and went on with his work. At one o'clock Mr. Cardew returned. Very agitated, he went rapidly to his room, and found the purse missing. In an instant he was out in the great office, where he said in a loud tone: "Gentlemen, a disgraceful robbery has just been committed in my room. Let no one leave the office on pain of instant dismissal."

Everybody except one we know sat dumfounded. Mr. Cardew went on: "A detective and two of his men are waiting below to make a thorough search of everybody in these offices. I have to apologize to you, one and all, for submitting to such a process, but it is inevitable. If anyone objects, he must resign his position in our employment."

No. No one objected. Messrs. Cardew & Co.'s employees were too well off to risk losing their comfortable situations, and they would rather have been searched every day and night than have resigned the same. Mr. Cardew, finding all going smoothly, summoned the detectives, and, one by one, each employe was taken into the partner's room and thoroughly searched.

The inquiry proved useless; but the detective did not give in. "With your leave," he said, turning to Mr. Cardew, "we'll have a look at the overcoats now."

Mr. Cardew led the way. Five minutes later he returned, looking very stern. The purse was in his hand and one of the detectives was carrying an overcoat. Mayhew grinned with joy. His triumph over his rival was at hand at last. But he changed color, and a sick feeling rushed to his heart, when Mr. Cardew tapped him on the shoulder and said:

"Come into my room at once."

Wondering and amazed, he obeyed, followed by the detective.

"Mayhew," said the partner, sternly, "is this your coat?"

"Yes, sir; that is my coat."

"Do you know that this purse has just been found in that very overcoat? My boy, I won't be hard on you, but you had better confess."

Mayhew was too thunderstricken to speak. He could only stand and stare at Mr. Cardew as though he had gone mad.

"Come," said the latter, putting his hand on his shoulder, you are very young, and perhaps if I give you one chance you will turn over a new leaf. You can go, but never let me see your face again."

Still wondering, still amazed, the wretched youth slunk from the room, and no one at that establishment ever saw him more.

How had it occurred that the purse deposited by Mayhew in Jack Langley's pocket had found its way into the pocket of the plotter himself? It happened in the most simple and yet in the most wonderful manner. Jack Langley's overcoat pocket contained a large rent at the base, and when Mayhew had inserted the purse, he had, of course, not known of this, otherwise he might have remembered the ominous fact that his own coat with the pocket wide open was underneath. By some strange cause, perhaps by the passing of some one in the cloakroom, who stumbled over against the coats, or by a heavy wagon going in the street and shaking the floor, the weighty purse had fallen from the coat above into the pocket of the coat beneath, so that Mayhew's coat, which occupied the latter position, received it. And that is why Jack Langley was not disgraced, and why he who would have disgraced him was punished himself.—Tit-Bits.

A ROMAN PICNIC.

An Incident of the Life of a Great Painter.

On the sad occasion of the death of Lord Leighton an angust personage wrote of him, and justly: "There was something even greater than his work, and that was the man himself." A pretty incident of the great painter's early life is told by Giovanni Costa.

In the month of May it was the custom formerly for all the artists in Rome to indulge in a picnic at Cervara, a farm in the Roman campagna. There used to be donkey races, and the winner of them was always the hero of the day.

On one of these picnics we had halted at a small town three miles out of Rome for breakfast. Everyone had dismounted and tied his beast to a paling, and all were eating merrily. Suddenly one of the donkeys kicked over a beehive, and out flew the bees to revenge themselves on the donkeys.

There were about 100 of the poor beasts, but they all unloosed themselves and took to flight, kicking up their heels in the air—all but one little donkey, who was unable to free himself, and so the whole swarm fell upon him.

The picnic party also broke up and fled, with the exception of one young man with fair, curly hair, dressed in velvet, who, slipping on gloves and tying a handkerchief over his face, ran to liberate the poor little beast. I had started to do the same, but less resolutely, having no gloves. So I met him as he came back, and congratulating him, asked him his name.

His name was Frederic Leighton.—Cornhill Magazine.

More Natural.

Rev. Walter Colton, author of "Ship and Shore," and other books, gave a most forcible illustration of the character of an officer on board the ship to which he was attached as chaplain. The officer was always meddling with other people's business, and was seldom in his own place. Consequently he was most unpopular with the sailors. One of them, goaded to unusual irritation, said one day: "I do believe that at the general resurrection the lieutenant will be found getting out of somebody else's grave!"—Youth's Companion.

FIRE INSURANCE AND ARSON.

The Premiums Regulated by the Number of Incendiary Fires. The loss of property in the United States by fire has declined steadily since 1893. In that year the total loss was \$167,000,000. The year following it was \$142,000,000. In 1895 it was \$140,000,000 and in 1896, \$120,000,000. At the same time the value of material property subject to destruction by fire steadily increased. The total fire losses paid by insurance companies have been decreasing for the last four years in the same ratio. In 1893 they were \$105,000,000; in 1894, \$95,000,000; in 1895, \$84,000,000, and in 1896, \$70,000,000. Massachusetts, while it contains no company ranking higher than fifteenth in amount of assets held by American and foreign companies doing business in the United States, has, in consequence of its excellent insurance laws and their strict enforcement, an average premium rate of \$1.05 per \$100 fire insurance. Iowa pays \$1.72 per \$100, the difference being because of the greater risk in the western state through the operations of incendiaries. This has led to the organization in Iowa of the Property Owners' Fire association, whose purpose is to secure a reduction in premium rates through the suppression of incendiary fires.

In Massachusetts the office of state fire marshal was established many years ago. The year previous there were only 17 convictions for incendiary fires, although the number of incendiary fires was 1,170. In 1896 there were only 635 of such fires, while the percentage of convictions to arrests was 86. Though the rule is not universal, it may be said generally that the fires of incendiary origin are more damaging than those which arise from accident or neglect. The reason of this is to be found in the fact that incendiary fires are started usually at night or in the early morning, when they have a chance to spread.

It is popularly supposed that the proportion of incendiary fires to the total number is larger in the big cities than in the country districts, but the opposite of this is true. Moreover, a fire once started, whether of incendiary origin or not, in a house, barn, storehouse or isolated building in the country, usually entails upon the insurance companies total loss, while a total loss in a city fire is extremely rare. In states or counties in which there are laws against incendiary fires and such laws are vigorously enforced, the fire risks of the companies are very much reduced and the premiums charged are more moderate than elsewhere. In New York city, for instance, there has been a steady reduction in insurance rates and rebates, and there are indications of a like reduction in Brooklyn. There are 550 fire insurance companies in the United States, and the total amount of risks written in a year averages \$20,000,000,000. This disbursement of American fire insurance companies and of foreign companies having American branches amount to \$150,000,000,000 in a year, of which sum \$70,000,000,000 is for losses, \$15,000,000,000 dividends to stockholders and the balance expenses.—N. Y. Sun.

GREATEST COST FORTUNES.

Men Who Have to Maintain Style in England Are Not to Be Envied.

An idea of the immense expenditure entailed by the possession of ancestral estates in Great Britain may be gathered from the statement that in several of the great country seats, such, for instance, as Chatsworth, belonging to the duke of Devonshire; Knowsley, belonging to the duke of Atholl, etc., the staff employed on the house and grounds, exclusive of agricultural laborers or artisans, amounts to 700 and 800 men. On a number of less magnificent places the force of indoor and outdoor servants, gardeners and gamekeepers exceeds 200, while it is estimated that there are not less than 1,200 country seats of third-rate magnitude which require the services of 70 and 80 men apiece. This is not so surprising when one remembers that at the duke of Portland's country seat at Welbeck there are three deer parks surrounded by 12 miles of iron fences.

An American visiting England once encountered a stone wall surrounding a private park, and thought he would walk to the corner of the park. Just what he accomplished is best described in his own language. "I walked and I walked," he said, "and still the wall extended far in front of me, with no sign of a corner. By and by I became footsore and weary, and sat down by the wayside to rest. Having recuperated, I resumed my journey along the wall, and my quest for the corner, but after walking several miles more, momentarily expecting to step off the island into the English channel, I remembered that my steamer sailed for home a week later, and so, rather than take the chance of losing it, I abandoned the job. Some day I'm going to England prepared to walk along that wall and find that corner if it takes two years, and I apprehend from my previous experience that it will take something like that time to do the trick."—Troy Times.

A Smart Squirrel.

A squirrel which left its winter home under some stones and gone up a neighboring apple tree, near Bath, Me., was seen by a dog. The dog took its stand at the foot of the tree and lay in wait. The squirrel lingered awhile, but the dog showed no signs of moving. Finally the squirrel dropped a withered apple near the dog. The apple rolled away down an incline, and the dog ran after it to find out what it was. While the dog was gone the squirrel escaped to its quarters.—N. Y. Sun.

Tough Duck.

Dumley (who has been asked to carve the duck, and is meeting with poor success)—Whew!

Landlady—Isn't the knife sharp, Mr. Dumley? I had it ground to-day.

"The knife is all right, Mrs. Henricks; you ought to have had the duck ground."—Tit-Bits.

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Advertisement for a Sewing Machine, featuring an illustration of the machine and text describing its features and availability.

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T. L. Green, County Clerk, Mt. Olivet, Ky. I want to buy for cash the following U. S. Revenue stamps, either canceled or uncanceled, at the prices annexed which stamps are sent in good condition:

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2 cent Certificate, orange, full perforate..... 10 cents
2 cent Express, blue, imperforate..... 5 cents
2 cent Express, blue, part perforate..... 5 cents
2 cent Playing Cards, blue, imperforate..... 50 cents
2 cent Playing Cards, blue, part perforate..... 50 cents
2 cent Proprietary, blue, imperforate..... 15 cents
2 cent Proprietary, blue, part perforate..... 10 cents
2 cent Proprietary, orange, full perforate..... 15 cents
2 cent Proprietary, orange, full perforate..... 15 cents
2 cent Playing Cards, red, imperforate..... 50 cents
4 cent Proprietary, violet, part perforate..... 10 cents
4 cent Proprietary, violet, part perforate..... 10 cents
4 cent Express, red, imperforate..... 10 cents
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40 cent Inland Exchange, imperforate..... 75 cents
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70 cent Foreign Exchange, green, imperforate..... 50 cents
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1 00 Passage Ticket, imperforate..... 1.50
1 00 Foreign Exchange, orange, imperforate..... 3.00
1 00 Foreign Exchange, maroon..... 4.00
2 00 Inland Exchange, imperforate..... 5.00
2 00 Probate of Will, imperforate..... 7.00
2 00 Probate of Will, imperforate..... 30.00
1 30 Blue and Black..... 1.50
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I also wish to buy old canceled postage stamps and stamped envelopes of any and all denominations from 1840 to 1875, for which I will pay liberal prices. Address T. L. GREEN, County Clerk, Mt. Olivet, Ky.

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The large steel wire forming the horizontal bars are first coiled around a 4 inch rod, thus practically becoming COILED SPRINGS their entire length. These are securely tied together by 16 cross bars to the rod. The cross bars are best quality of annealed wire (galvanized), wrapped three times around each horizontal bar.

ITS ADVANTAGES. Being a SELF REGULATOR it is ALWAYS ready for business, slacks up for 30 below as cheerfully as it takes a new grip for 90 in the shade, gently, but firmly persuades a runaway team to reconsider its action. An unruly bull is safe as a canary in its cage; it saith unto the festive hog, "thus far shall thou go." The fierce wind and drifting snow pass by and it heeds them not. There is no terror in the locomotive spark. The trespasser is not led into temptation, and the rail stealer's "occupation is gone." The hired man and the lagging tramp, alike scorn it proffered shade. Like the model housewife, when well supported, it is always neat and tidy.

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We have completed (and are now building) a lot of this fence for Bourbon farmers and you can examine into its merits for yourself.

Estimates cheerfully furnished. You may put up the posts and we will build the fence, or we will contract to do the whole job. If you are needing any fence, see us. We will save you money and still build you the best fence made. Respectfully,

MILLER & COLLINS, PARIS, KY.

The Page Wire Fence in Bourbon.

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I am so well pleased with the fence that I am going to put up more of it right away. Respectfully,

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